

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A method of conducting an auction having at least two competing bidders, comprising:
receiving bid data from at least one bidder; and
providing the bid data to a bidder that meets a condition for receiving the bid data.

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2. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining whether a bidder meets a condition for receiving the bid data.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes determining whether the bidder has placed at least one bid.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes determining whether the bidder is the lead bidder.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes determining whether the bidder is ranked above a predetermined number of bidders.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes determining whether the bidder is ranked above a predetermined percentage of bidders.

7. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes determining whether the bidder has entered a bid within a predetermined time period.

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8. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes:

- establishing a best bid placed by any bidder;
- calculating a difference between a best bid placed by the bidder and the best bid
- 5 placed by any one of the at least two bidders; and
- determining whether said calculated difference for the bidder is less than a predetermined amount.

9. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes:

- establishing a best bid placed by all bidders;
- calculating a difference between a best bid placed by the bidder and the best bid
- 5 placed by any one of the at least two bidders; and
- determining whether said calculated difference for the bidder is less than a predetermined percentage.

10. The method of claim 2, wherein said determining whether a bidder meets a condition includes determining whether the bidder has placed at least one bid that is better than a predetermined amount.

11. The method of claim 2, wherein the bid data includes an amount of money for which at least one of the at least two bidders is willing to sell a good.

12. The method of claim 2, wherein the bid data includes an amount of money for which at least one of the at least two bidders is willing to sell a service.

13. The method of claim 2, wherein the bid data includes the total value for which at least one of the at least two bidders is willing to sell a good.

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14. The method of claim 13, wherein the total value is represented by a numeric value.

15. The method of claim 2, wherein the bid data includes a numeric value representative of the total value for which at least one of the at least two bidders is willing to sell a service.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the providing bid data includes providing bid data related to all of the at least two bidders that have submitted at least one bid.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein the providing bid data includes providing bid data related to less than all of the at least two bidders that have submitted at least one bid.

18. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
determining the rank of a bidder based on the best numeric value bid by the bidder; and

5 wherein said providing bid data further comprises providing bid data related to the next better ranked bidder to the bidder.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising providing said bid data to a bidder only after the bidder has submitted a valid bid.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein the auction is electronic.

21. The method of claim 1, wherein the auction is held online.

22. An apparatus for ~~determining~~ a suggested bid value that surpasses a selected bid, comprising:

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5 a computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to provide a user selectable facility which, when selected:

establishes the value of the selected bid;
calculates the suggested bid value by applying a predetermined minimum differential value to the selected bid value; and
conveys the suggested bid value to the user.

23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said applying a predetermined minimum differential value to the selected bid value includes subtracting the predetermined minimum differential value from the selected bid value.

24. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said applying a predetermined minimum differential value to the selected bid value includes subtracting the predetermined minimum differential value from the selected bid value.

25. An apparatus for determining a suggested bid value that surpasses a selected bid, comprising:

5 a computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to provide a user selectable facility which, when selected:

establishes the value of the selected bid;
calculates the suggested bid value by applying a predetermined minimum differential percentage to the selected bid value; and
conveys the suggested bid value to the user.

26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said applying a predetermined minimum differential percentage to the selected bid value includes subtracting the predetermined minimum differential percentage from the selected bid value.

27. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein said applying a predetermined minimum differential percentage ~~to the~~ selected bid value includes subtracting the predetermined minimum differential percentage from the selected bid value.

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